

PENDANT FOR CARRYING REMEMBRANCES SUCH AS CREMATION
REMAINS AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to preserving crematory remains, a hair sample or the like. Specifically this invention relates to hermetically preserving the organic remains in a decorative jewelry-pendant for attachment to a neck chain, maintaining the remains in close proximity to the holder thereof.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Cremation of the remains of humans and animals, such as pets, has now become a common alternative for preservation and burial of the deceased. The ashes of the cremated decedent are sometimes distributed in accordance with the wishes of the decedent, but can also be deposited in urns for storage and memorialization purposes. The urns may be retained by the family in a home or other location, or held in permanent storage in a mausoleum.

[0003] One example of a storage container for human remains is described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,287,603 to Schorman. The '603 patent describes a storage container for human ashes that includes a bottom portion, a plurality of walls, a rim portion, a cover which fits into a recessed portion of the rim portion, a retainer portion which retains the cover within the recessed portion, and fastener means to fasten the retainer portion to the cover. The cover can include indicia or other decoration. One disadvantage of the container of the '603 patent is that the

boxy structure of the container is designed for assemblage with other containers and suitable only for use in a mausoleum type setting and would not be desirable for a stand alone display. Furthermore, the container is placed on a shelf or other suitable storage location wherein it is visited on occasion by those who so desire, and cannot easily be transported or carried around by one who may wish to retain the remains near their person.

[0004] In the alternative, U.S. Pat. No. 5,755,116 to Sparacino et al. discloses remembrance preserving jewelry and method for its use, comprising a chamber for sealing a sample there within. The invention utilizes interconnecting front and rear housing members, wherein the ashes are placed there between and sealed by means of either silicone sealant, or a threaded connection. Other crematory pendants historically, have been sealed by means of a stopper, or jewelers epoxy, and although sufficient sealing may be achieved through these means, it is possible that the threaded cover may inadvertently loosen over time, or the silicone seal deteriorates, exposing the organic remains to the outside.

[0005] Furthermore, if a silicone sealant or epoxy is utilized, during assemblage, it may come in contact with the contents intended to be contained there within, which is undesirable. It is therefore beneficial to create a jewelry pendant containing the crematory ashes or other organic remembrances of a loved one utilizing a permanent sealing means of maintaining the contents therein, eliminating the possibility of inadvertently opening the chamber and possibly spilling the contents, while preserving the integrity of the contents during

assemblage of the pendant. The present invention is directed to meeting these needs, among others.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is an object of the present invention to create a hermetically sealed jewelry pendant, for containing the ashes or other organic remembrances of a loved one or pet there within.

[0007] It is a further object of the present invention is to create a jewelry pendant which comprises a variety of aesthetical shapes, including but not limited to hearts, crosses, or teardrop shapes.

[0008] Another object of the invention is to provide a permanent sealed container which will not damage the contents stored within during assembly, while still providing a secure concealment.

[0009] A further object of the present invention is to provide a sealing means for manufacturing the hermetically-sealed jewelry pendant, utilizing a laser welding operation, for precisely sealing the two housing members together.

[0010] A final object of the present invention is to provide a laser-welded, hermetically sealed pendant for containing the ashes or other organic remembrances of a loved one or pet there within, whereby the welded seam is hidden by a decorative frame.

[0011] These and other objects are accomplished in the present invention by providing a laser welded capsule comprising generally identical front and rear concave housing members, having a continuous sacrificial lip around

the adjoining edges of both housing halves, that are laser-welded together once the desired organic sample is contained there between.

[0012] The laser welding process utilizes amplified light to weld metals instead of the traditional way of soldering with a torch. The advantages are many. The laser beam itself is so precise and the heat is so localized, repairs can be made close to heat sensitive stones, or other easily damaged materials. There is no solder in a laser welded repair joint so they are much stronger than traditional solder joints. All of the traditional jewelry metals can be laser welded, including all base metals, karat golds, sterling silver, titanium, palladium, and platinum. Welding different metals groups is also possible, .i.e., gold to platinum, sterling to gold, etc. allowing greater possibilities in the end product.

[0013] The laser produces a sharply focused light beam that melts a very small area of metal. The metal cools instantly, fusing the two pieces together. Multiple shots can be taken with the laser to achieve the precise weld that is needed. By adjusting the laser beam's strength and diameter, one can precisely deliver just the amount of energy necessary to achieve a strong weld. Laser-welded joints have more than triple the strength of soldered joints, without having to heat up the piece, preventing damage to the thin metal utilized, or the contents stored there within.

[0014] Once the pendant is sealed completely around, a decorative frame may be concentrically attached via. the laser, concealing the seam from the prior welding process.

[0015] Further areas of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description provided hereinafter. It should be understood that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating the preferred embodiment of the invention, are intended for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description and the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0017] Figure 1 illustrates a perspective view of a first embodiment of the pendant;

[0018] Figure 2 shows a cross sectional, side view of the pendant, wherein the front and rear housing members are confrontingly aligned, prior to adjoining;

[0019] Figure 3 is a partial cross-sectional side view of the pendant wherein the front and rear housing members are adjoined, prior to laser welding;

[0020] Figure 4 is a partial cross-sectional side view of the pendant wherein the front and rear housing members are adjoined, after being laser-welded together; and

[0021] Figure 5 is a partial cross-sectional side view of the pendant wherein the front and rear housing members are adjoined, after being laser-welded together, wherein the laser weld seam is covered by a concealing frame.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0022] The following description of the preferred embodiment(s) is merely exemplary in nature and is in no way intended to limit the invention, its application, or uses. Referring now to Figures 1 and 2, a first embodiment of the invention is shown comprising a pendant 10 for hanging by a neck chain or the like from a bail 40, the pendant 10 here shown having an oval shape, although a plurality of shapes may be embodied by this invention. The pendant 10 is formed by two generally identical concave housing elements 12 and 14, sealed together, to form a hollow chamber there between, giving the pendant a three-dimensional shape and providing room for the placement of crematory ashes, a lock of hair, or any other personal remembrance so desired. As mentioned, the pendant can be designed to embody any one of a plurality of different shaped housings, including but not limited to round, oval, rectangular, square, teardrop, triangular, or cross-shaped.

[0023] The front and rear housing elements 12 and 14 can each be formed from any one of a number of thin precious or common metals commonly used to create decorative jewelry, such as karat gold or silver, and may be used in combination if so desired. The metal utilized is thin, approximately 0.012 inches in thickness, thereby requiring the precise accuracy of the laser-welding to conjoin the two housing elements without damaging the housing or the contents placed therein.

[0024] When the housing elements 12, 14 are brought together with the ashes or other desired items contained there within as shown in Figure 3, the

sacrificial lips 13 and 15 of the housing elements 12 and 14 respectively are aligned. The lips 13 and 15, form the location where the laser 30 is focused, which locally heats the lips 13 and 15 so as to melt them together, forming the welded seam 18 shown in Figure 4. The sacrificial lips 13 and 15 of the housing elements 12 and 14 are necessary otherwise the intensity of the laser would simply melt a hole, penetrating the thin metal of the capsule if the two housing elements 12 and 14 were simply conjoined along an edge.

[0025] Once welded, a continuous and generally uniform seam 18 around the pendant results, with the contents hermetically sealed there within. A frame 22 or decorative trim is then optionally laser-welded over the continuous seam 18, hiding the seam 18 from view and further protecting the pendant weld as shown in Figure 5. Additionally, a bail 40 or loop may be welded to the frame 22 so as to allow the pendant 10 to be hung from a neck chain, or the like.

[0026] To reemphasize its versatility, the invention can apply to a plurality of various pendant designs, utilizing a plurality of metals, with the same results. The description of the invention is merely exemplary in nature and, thus, variations that do not depart from the gist of the invention are intended to be within the scope of the invention. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention.